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FOR "INSIDE..." AND
FOR YOU

Reports on several kinds of travelers...people you might see when you visit USDA...a few gems from things read and who knows what else? Keep readin'.

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WHY THERE'S _____! If you come tooling through USDA in the next month, you're apt to run into some folks you've known and thought were long gone. They're part of the volunteer visitor assistance service dreamed up by old friend Walter John, now exec. director of the Organization of Professional Employees of the U.S. Dept. of Ag. (OPEDA).

Walt, a retiree himself, has always wondered about lots of things and how improvements might help. This idea is a typical John idea.

He's asked several long-time employees, members of OPEDA, who have retired to offer their services without compensation for 3 hours or more a day. They place themselves at the main entrances to the Department to help visitors find offices, such as GPA's Visitor Information Center, and locate people the visitors might want to see. The volunteers also hand out a little booklet with information about the Department's agencies.

Participants in the trial service include T. C. Byerly, Ed Callahan, Altie Cohen, Erwin C. Elting, Gordon Fox, C. B. Gilliland, Rose Kumro, Charles McDougall, Kenneth Ogren, C. Kyle Randall, Ida Lee Sliney, Ralph Spencer, Ed Strand, Harry Trelogan, Stephen Wrather and Sam Hoover.

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GONE FOR NOW, MAYBE

Remember H.R. 5424, the National Publications Act of 1980 that was going to change the way government printing is handled?

Word has it that the House Govt. Operations Committee submitted the bill to the full House on June 19 without recommendation. The fact that the bill was submitted without recommendation indicates the controversial nature of the bill and the strong opposition to it from govt. agencies, including OMB, private industry and others.

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AUG 26 '80

NELSON RETURNS

We thought we'd lost him...but he came back.

We're talking about Nelson Fitton, who's been on a trip that took him to Purdue U., the U. of Illinois, the ACE meeting and field offices of the Science and Education Administration and the Forest Service. Most of these activities related to Nelson's Senior Executive Service candidacy project.

At Purdue, Nelson examined the computer-based inf system called FACTS (Fast Agricultural Communication Terminal System). The system, funded by a W.K. Kellogg Foundation grant, provides inf quickly to county agents and captures an increasing body of knowledge on ag and its allied areas for use to meet demands for inf and to improve the coordination and integration of inf. Terminals are now set up in 91 of 92 Indiana counties and linked by telephone lines to a central computer at Purdue. Each terminal is a small computer in its own right and has local inf processing capability. The county terminals can communicate with each other through the central computer which serves as a messenger-switcher among the counties.

At Illinois, Nelson examined the Plato IV Computer-based Educational System which has been highly successful as a comm network in learning. You may have heard about it before...a unique interactive system that allows the user to operate independently on a wide variety of teaching materials and inf. It also serves as a national computer-based inf and comm network...is set up in a number of locations and can be linked for intercommunication and for an exchange of teaching materials and other kinds of inf.

While attending the ACE meeting, Nelson discussed with a number of university reps the possibilities of increasing cooperative publishing...met with inf staff at the Forest Service's office and sat in on a meeting with SEA regional inf officers and Alice Skelsey, SEA, to discuss various matters about the Department's publishing program. One of the issues concerned use of terminals to transmit manuscripts electronically to D.C. for review and to capture keystrokes for fast photo-composition.

What's "cooperative publishing"? Well, say you're getting ready to publish something that others might use...or vice versa. If we pool funds and print together, chances are the per copy cost can be quite less...since several can print larger quantities collectively than one outfit might handle alone. You might call it "cost sharing," but it goes further than that.

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MORE ABOUT OR
FROM ACE

And speaking of ACE, Larry Quinn, GPA, brought back some advice from speaker Orion Samuelson, WGN-TV, Chicago, which he expressed in the opening session: "...ignorance and apathy are two major areas of concern for ag communicators as they face the challenges of the '80s."

Jim Haynes, vice pres for KCBN PR in Dallas, another speaker, said planning communication objectives will help us know whether or not we achieve them. He encouraged communicators to agree on measurable objectives, define audiences and prioritize approaches.

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JUST PASSING THROUGH While all that was going on, "Inside..." had a telephone call from former USDA Inf Director R. Lyle Webster. He was enroute to Florida from Hawaii and was changing planes here.

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PROCEEDINGS AVAILABLE Gary Arnold, Texas A&M U., has shared with us a proceedings FOR YOU booklet from an alcohol-fuel symposium held at A&M in early July. Gary says copies of the proceedings are still available from the Dept. of Ag Comm at A&M for 5 bucks each. Write Gary if you need one...and enclose \$5.

The symposium was jointly sponsored by the experiment station, extension service and the Center for Energy and Mineral Resources. Gary says the passing of the Fuels Act made the timing perfect and response "was grand...over 400 farmers, bankers, legislators and businessmen attended the two-day meeting."

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HOW ABOUT A FARMERS "Psychology Today" ran an article in its July issue that BULLETIN? caught the eye of Tom McDonald of the Economics, Statistics and Cooperatives Service. We just have to share it with you as he did with us.

Seems a couple of university psychologists chose 8 published papers from 8 top psychology journals, substituted made-up names for the names of the real authors and their high-status institutions and resubmitted the papers to the same journals that had originally run them. Only 3 of the 8 papers were recognized. Of the 10 psychologists in the authors' fields who were assigned to evaluate the rest, 8 said the papers were not worth publishing.

Most reviewers said things like: "The ms. doesn't make a significant contribution. Serious methodological difficulties. Implications and value seem pretty trivial.

The two researchers who found out all this then sat down and wrote an article critical of the system, made several proposals for reform, presented their findings and proposals to a meeting of other psychologists in England but then found that no journal would publish their paper.

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"D" STANDS FOR... Probably folks coping with the heat and dryness of this summer in many parts of the country could care less...but we've wondered about this: Is it "drouth" or "drought"?

Our dictionary lists "drought" as first spelling but then shows the preferred pronunciation to be "drouth."

We think it's a regionalized difference. For instance, news reports from the Southwest spell the word "drouth." Wire stories and Eastern styles spell it "drought" and often we hear it pronounced with a distinct "t" at the end of the word.

What do you think?

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ABOUT THAT ISEC LIST

Response to the weekly leaflet of "Speech and Major Policy Releases" has been heavy. So far, no one has disliked the idea and several people have asked to be removed from the old listings and put on the "ISEC" list to receive only the weekly package.

If you want off old lists, please provide the News Center with the mailing label of any list you want to drop. Then you can be dropped. Remember, you might not get everything you now get if you do that...but maybe that won't matter and that will result in an even greater saving.